

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action identified above, and is responsive in any other manner indicated below.

PENDING CLAIMS

Claims 1-17, 24, 26 and 32-38 were pending, under consideration and subject to examination in the Office Action. Appropriate claims have been amended, canceled and/or added (without prejudice or disclaimer) in order to adjust a clarity and/or focus of Applicant's claimed invention. That is, such changes are unrelated to any prior art or scope adjustment, and are simply refocused claims in which Applicant is presently interested. At entry of this paper, Claims 2-3, 6-8, 24, 26 and 32-44 will be pending for consideration and examination in the application.

§103 REJECTIONS - OBSOLETE VIA CLAIM CANCELLATION/AMENDMENT

All 35 USC §103 prior art rejection(s) are respectfully traversed, but the present cancellation and/or amendment of such claims (without prejudice or disclaimer) to obtain a patent (without prejudice or disclaimer) on ones of the allowable claims as quickly as possible has rendered such rejection(s) obsolete, and thus gratuitous traversal arguments concerning the rejection(s) are omitted for brevity. Further discussions/arguments concerning such rejection(s) are left for the future if/when appropriate. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of such rejection(s) are respectfully requested.

The above statements, or any present cancellation of claims (without prejudice or disclaimer), should not be taken as an indication or admission that any rejection was valid, or as a disclaimer of any scope or subject matter, but is merely use of a procedural approach to obtain a patent (without prejudice or disclaimer) on ones of the allowable claims as quickly as possible.

ALLOWED CLAIMS

Claims 24 and 32-38 are allowed in the application, as indicated within the section number "9" on page 7 of the Office Action. Applicant and the undersigned respectfully thank the Examiner for such indication of allowable subject matter.

REWRITTEN ALLOWABLE CLAIMS

Claims 2-3, 6-8 and 26 were indicated as being allowable if rewritten as indicated within the section number "10" on page 7 of the Office Action, and at least appropriate base ones of such claims have been so rewritten. Further, ones of such claims have been minorly amended (e.g., to improve clarity, correct antecedents, remove extraneous portions, etc.) in a manner believed not to affect an allowability thereof. Renewal of the allowance is respectfully requested. Applicant and the undersigned respectfully thank the Examiner for such an indication of allowance.

ALLOWABLE CLAIMS DUE TO DEPENDENCY

Added Claims 39 and 40 depend from ones of the above-discussed allowable claims, and owing to dependency from allowable claims, such claims should likewise

be allowable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, reconsideration and express written allowance of such claims are respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE CLAIMS DUE TO PARALLELISM

Unrelated to any prior art rejections, a set of apparatus Claims 41-44 have been added. Such apparatus Claims 41-44 include important ones of the features/limitations of the allowable Claims 2, 3, 6 and 7, respectively, and owing to such parallelism, such claims should likewise be allowable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, consideration and express written allowance of such claims are respectfully requested.

ALL CLAIMS IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE

In view of the fact that all prior art rejected claims have now been cancelled (without prejudice or disclaimer) or amended, and in view of the fact that all remaining claims have either already been allowed and/or rewritten into independent form, to depend from allowed claims, and/or to include features/limitations of allowed claims, it is respectfully submitted that all presently-pending claims are now in condition for allowance, and an early Notice with respect to the present application is respectfully requested.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

It is respectfully submitted that any and all claim amendments and/or cancellations submitted within this paper and throughout prosecution of the present

application are without prejudice or disclaimer. That is, any above statements, or any present amendment or cancellation of claims (all made without prejudice or disclaimer), should not be taken as an indication or admission that any objection/rejection was valid, or as a disclaimer of any scope or subject matter. Applicant respectfully reserves all rights to file subsequent related application(s) (including reissue applications) directed to any/all previously claimed limitations/features which have been subsequently amended or cancelled, or to any/all limitations/features not yet claimed, *i.e.*, Applicant continues (indefinitely) to maintain no intention or desire to dedicate or surrender any limitations/features of subject matter of the present application to the public.

EXAMINER INVITED TO TELEPHONE

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the local D.C. area number 703-312-6600, to discuss an Examiner's Amendments or other suggested action for accelerating prosecution and moving the present application to allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims listed above as presently being under consideration in the application are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of such claims is respectfully requested.

This Amendment is being filed within the shortened statutory period for response set by the 2 December 2004 Office Action, and therefore, no Petition or

extension fee is required. To whatever other extent is actually necessary, Applicant respectfully petitions the Commissioner for an extension of time under 37 CFR §1.136. Attached is a Form PTO-2038 authorizing payment of the additional claims fees required for entry of this paper. Please charge any actual fee deficiency to ATS&K Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (as Case No. 500.38017X00).

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
PTO-2038 (Fee Code 1201)